

Appl. No. 09/914,966  
Atty. Docket No. 7456R  
Amendment Dated June 29, 2005  
Reply to Office Action Dated April 7, 2005  
Customer No. 27752

### REMARKS

Claims 11, 29 and 30 have been amended to define the claimed invention with greater specificity by defining the fiber of the claimed invention as having an average fiber diameter of less than 5  $\mu$ m. Support for these amendments is found in Specification at page 24, lines 10-14.

Claims 11-18 and 20-32 are pending. No additional claims fee is believed to be due.

#### Rejections Under §103:

Claims 11-13, 15-18, 20-27, 29 and 30 are rejected by the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly defining obvious subject matter over U.S. Patent No. 4,243,480 to Hernandez et al. ("Hernandez"). The Office Action asserts that Hernandez teaches starch fibers having a diameter of 10-500 microns that are made via a solvent spinning process (not melt blowing and/or spunbonding).

Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 11, 29 and 30 are not rendered obvious over Hernandez because Hernandez fails to teach each and every element of Claims 11, 29 and 30, as amended. More specifically, Applicants submit that Hernandez fails to teach starch fibers that are absorbent and/or that have an average fiber diameter of less than 5 microns.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 11, 29 and 30, as amended, are not rendered obvious over Hernandez. MPEP 2143.03. Further, Applicants submit that Claims 12-13, 15-18 and 20-27, which ultimately depend from Claim 11, as amended, are not rendered obvious over Hernandez. MPEP 2143.03.

Claim 14 is rejected by the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly defining obvious subject matter over Hernandez in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,516,815 to Buehler et al. ("Buehler").

Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 14, which ultimately depends from Claim 11, as amended, is not rendered obvious over Hernandez alone or in combination with Buehler. MPEP 2143.03.

Claim 28 is rejected by the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly defining obvious subject matter over Hernandez.

Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 28, which ultimately depends from Claim 11, as amended, is not rendered obvious over Hernandez. MPEP 2143.03.

Claims 31-32 are rejected by the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly defining obvious subject matter over Hernandez.

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Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 31-32, which ultimately depend from Claim 11, as amended, are not rendered obvious over Hernandez. MPEP 2143.03.

#### Conclusion

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103. Early and favorable action in the case is respectfully requested.

This response represents an earnest effort to place the application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as now claimed from the applied references. In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of this application, entry of the amendments presented herein, and allowance of Claims 11-18 and 20-32 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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